



Indiana State
Department of Health

Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Judith A. Monroe, M.D.
State Health Commissioner

DATE: April 28, 2009
TO: Indiana Public Health Officials
Infection Preventionists
Healthcare Providers
FROM: James Howell, DVM MPH
State Epidemiologist
RE: **Guidelines for enhanced surveillance and testing for novel influenza A/H1N1/
North America/Human influenza virus in Indiana**

*****Please distribute widely*****

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported novel A/H1N1/North America/Human influenza virus infections in several states. An MMWR summarizing the initial investigation can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm58d0424a1.htm>. The World Health Organization has also reported infections in Mexico and other countries caused by viruses that are genetically identical to the U.S. cases. The **Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)** is actively investigating leads on cases of this influenza strain in Indiana. One confirmed case has been identified in Indiana at this time.

Investigations are ongoing and updates will be forthcoming in the media and at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu>, <http://www.who.int/en/>, and www.H1N1.in.gov. Interim guidance on infection control, treatment, and chemoprophylaxis for A/H1N1/North America/Human influenza is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/guidance/>.

Attached are interim guidelines for testing specimens associated with this outbreak. Specimens from patients **that meet the criteria for being a suspect case** (see definition below) will be tested at the ISDH Laboratory. Submitters and local health officials will be notified of tests results as soon as they become available.

Electronic submission of influenza samples is available through the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and will potentially shorten the turnaround time for results. To establish an account for electronic submission, contact the LIMSnet Helpdesk at (888) 535-0011.

If you have any questions please contact:

Epidemiology and Surveillance:
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ISDH Influenza Coordinator
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Laboratory Issues:
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TESTING SUSPECT CASES OF A/H1N1/NORTH AMERICA/HUMAN INFLUENZA –

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) requests health care providers to collect specimens from any patient who meets the following criteria:

The patient presents with signs and symptoms characteristic of influenza (**fever ≥ 100 degrees Fahrenheit with cough or sore throat**), **AND**

- a) Has had a positive test result for influenza A, **OR**
- b) Has traveled to another state or country with confirmed cases of A/H1N1/North America/Human influenza within 7 days of illness, **OR**
- c) Has been in contact with someone ill with a suspected, probable, or confirmed case of the current outbreak strain within 7 days of illness.

Note: Specimens that are influenza B positive with rapid influenza testing should not be sent.

Note: ISDH Lab cannot test swabs that have already been used to perform rapid testing.

SPECIMEN COLLECTION:

1. Insert a nasopharyngeal swab with flexible shaft through nostril to posterior nasopharynx. (Do not use wooden shaft swabs. Dacron, rayon, or flocked swabs give optimal results.)
2. Place swab in viral transport medium. If you cannot obtain viral transport medium, you may use other transport media but sensitivity may be compromised.
3. If necessary, break or cut shaft to allow the transport tube to be completely sealed.
4. NP aspirates in viral transport medium are also excellent specimens.
5. Label each tube with the patient's name and the collection date.
6. Specimens should be placed at refrigerator temperature immediately after collection and transported with cold packs.
7. Complete an Influenza Lab Submission form for each specimen (form is included here and can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/icpr/webfile/formsdiv/35212.pdf>). Make sure your clinic or laboratory address is complete.
8. If unable to ship the same day, refrigerate the specimens.
9. Transport the specimens on cold packs with Overnight Delivery. Holding the specimens longer than 24 hours will decrease the chance for influenza isolation.

PACKING AND SHIPPING:

1. Wrap the specimen(s) in an absorbent pad and secure all specimens a Ziploc-type bag.
2. Place the completed Influenza Lab Submission form(s) in the liner of the bag and enclose with the frozen cold pack in a Styrofoam container. Please make sure to complete Section 4 highlighting the person's travel history or contact with someone with a significant travel history.
3. Place the Styrofoam container into the cardboard box and secure the box with packaging tape.
4. Address to:
 1. Indiana State Department of Health Laboratory
 2. Attn: Virology Laboratory
 3. 550 W. 16th Street, Suite B
 4. Indianapolis, IN 46202
5. Attach your **return address** label; include the **name and telephone number** of the person who knows the content of the package (requirement) with the return address.
6. Specimens should be shipped so they arrive at the ISDH Lab during business hours, Monday –Saturday.